

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of the claims replaces all prior versions and listing of the claims in the present application.

Listing of Claims

1-7. (canceled)

8. (new) A machine for orienting, straightening and aligning plastic vessels or bottles, comprising:

a hopper for randomly loading the vessels or bottles, said hopper having a rotating cylindrical wall (1) carrying on its external face a plurality of cradles (5) with below-placed discharging channels (8);

a carousel (7) with a plurality of separators (9) defining vertical channels or openings (10) that receive the vessels or bottles from said discharging channels; and

a mechanical speed gear (50) for changing a ratio of a number of revolutions of said carousel with respect to a number of revolutions of said cylindrical wall,

wherein said mechanical speed gear comprises,

two idle toothed wheels (21) and (22) on a first motored shaft (12) that rotates said cylindrical wall,

a grooved wheel (23) that is between said two toothed wheels and that is keyed-in onto said first shaft, said grooved wheel

being movable between said two toothed wheels in an axial direction of said first shaft,

stakes (31) on respective faces of said grooved wheel that are insertable into corresponding seats (32) in said toothed wheels to drive said toothed wheels, and

said toothed wheels being connected through chains (40) and (41) respectively to further toothed wheels (38) and (39) that are keyed-in onto a second shaft (35) that rotates said carousel.

9. (new) The machine according to claim 8, further comprising a pneumatic cylinder (30) that operates on a fork (26) carrying two rollers (24) that engage a groove (23a) of said grooved wheel.

10. (new) The machine according to claim 8, further comprising a phase changer (37) inserted onto said second shaft to change an angular position between said first shaft and said second shaft.